

Low Mortality in Some Auction Calves

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An interesting bit of "bonus information" developed from a study of blood constituents from young calves offered at auction. One purpose of the study was to add to the scant information available on the blood constituents of young calves. Such information could be very useful in formulating approaches to calf-hood disease control. It also was hoped that one or more of the constituent-tests might yield a tool which could be used in identifying animals with poor disease resistance. Ordinarily very young calves purchased through auctions are considered to have high incidence of sickness and death, probably related to stress factors of moving, changing environments and feeding schedules and also due to the opportunity for exposure to any or all diseases which might be prevalent on the farms of origin or at the auction yards, since these young calves usually are all penned together as they arrive at the auction.

During the fall of 1965 and winter and spring of 1966, blood samples were taken at an auction yard from 106 calves that appeared to be not over two weeks of age. The auction management* kindly furnished the name and address of the

purchaser and the commendable response of the purchasers yielded 103 replies to questionnaires sent out two weeks after purchase of the calves. From the replies received, it was possible to place the calves into "well" (those in which the owner observed no symptoms of illness), "sick" (those showing signs of illness but alive at the time the report was submitted) and "died." Surprisingly, only six of the 103 were reported as "died", with 28 in the "sick" group and 69 in the "well" group. Reports from the fall of 1966 and covering winter, spring and into summer of 1967 are not complete but appear to be paralleling the previous period.

In explaining the reasons for the very low mortality rate encountered at this particular auction, the following considerations are offered.

1. Purchaser's addresses revealed that the calves apparently are purchased within a 25 mile radius of auction. Auction market personnel also indicated that consignors originate within the same approximate area. This adds up to a minimum of stress in exposure and shipping.
2. Calves apparently are sold only once in most instances, are rarely sent from one auction to another, and thus have a minimum period of stress and adjustment to new regimes and environments.

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3. Most calves arrive at auction within three hours before they are sold and within five hours of arrival they are removed by the purchaser. This practice tends to minimize the exposure time of any particular calf to the entire group. Purchase records also reveal that few purchasers buy more than two of these young calves on a particular sale day. This practice also could minimize exposure potential between animals originating from a number of sources.

SUMMARY:

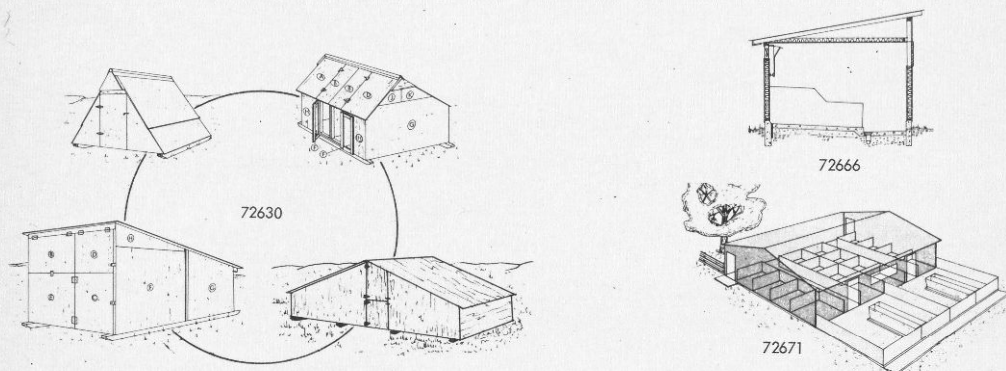
Information received from purchasers of 103 individual young calves offered at auction during fall of 1965 and winter and spring of 1966 revealed a very low mortality rate. These calves went to 58 different farms, presumably representing a variety of management practices, but only six were reported as having died within two weeks after purchase. Circumstances at this particular auction appear to be such as to minimize stress factors, with a resulting low mortality among calves handled through this facility.



NINE SWINE BUILDING PLANS REVISED

Building layout, construction details, insulation and ventilation recommendations are included in revised swine building plans published through the Midwest Plans Service. Recent developments such as totally slotted floors for the farrowing and liquid manure storage are included on the revised plans.

The Midwest Plan Service is made up of Extension and Research Agricultural Engineers from the 13 North Central States Land Grant Universities. Through this service research findings and field experiences are applied to farm building and equipment plans such as those described.



Plan Title	Building Size	No. and Size of Pens	Comments	Plan No.	Price
FARROWING HOUSES Portable		This plan details four small farrowing houses.	Shows a 1-pen, two 2-pen, and one 4-pen house.	72630	\$1.00
FARROWING HOUSE Single Row	12'x40'	8-5'x7½' stalls	8'x12' outside feeding platform. 4' feeding alley.	72666	.25
FARROW AND START Outside Feeding	24'x46'	16-5'x7½' stalls	Solid floor	72671	.75
FARROW AND START	34'x46'	16-5'x12' stalls	Center alley over gutter. Pens partially slatted.	72672	.75
COLD FINISHING HOUSES	28'x40'	4-10'x11' pens	Indoor feeding. 7'-6" wide alley over gutter.	72673	.75
TOTAL SLOTTED FLOOR FINISHING	40'x60'	8-9'x16½' and 4-6'x16½' or 6-10'x16' and 6-10'x22' pens	Total slotted floors. Annex for emptying pit.	72674	.75
FINISHING HOUSE Partially-slatted Floors	36'x48'	6-8'x12' and 6-8'x20' pens	Partial-slatted floors. Three alternate layouts given.	72675	.75
FARROWING HOUSE Slatted Floors	24'x48'	16-5'x7' stalls	Stalls over slats. Optional solid floor or partial slats.	72677	.75
STARTING BUILDING	24'x40'	8-10'x10' pens	Full slotted floor. Designed for 20 lb to 100 lb pigs.	72678	1.00

